



THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

Honorable Tom Bradley  
Mayor  
City of Los Angeles  
Los Angeles, California

Mr. Byron Cook  
Chairman  
Southern California Rapid Transit District  
425 South Main Street  
Los Angeles, California

Dear Mayor Bradley and Mr. Cook:

I am writing you in response to the four-part program for improvement of public transportation which you have submitted to the Department of Transportation. This program includes: (1) a regional transportation systems management (TSM) plan (identified in your analysis as Alternative II); (2) high level bus-on-freeway service (identified as Alternative IX-A); (3) a Downtown People Mover for the Los Angeles central business district; and (4) a rail rapid transit system in the Wilshire/La Brea corridor (identified as Alternative E).

The development of a consensus around this region-wide public transportation improvement program under your far-sighted leadership represents important progress in co-operative decision-making by the public agencies in the Los Angeles area and the State, and I want to compliment all agencies involved. The Los Angeles metropolitan area is the second largest urbanized area in the nation, and the provision of adequate public transportation alternatives for people in the region is of vital interest to this Department. We welcome the opportunity to respond positively to your proposals.

Our detailed review of your proposals has produced the following conclusions. We find the first two elements of your proposal--transportation systems management improvements, and high level bus-on-freeway service--to be well

justified by the analysis. Accordingly, the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are prepared to provide the \$7.8 million requested for preliminary engineering and environmental impact analysis on these proposals. The State Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) should begin the appropriate steps to secure FHWA funding, and should deal directly with FHWA on that matter; UMTA funds should be sought directly from that agency.

With regard to the Downtown People Mover (DPM), UMTA has reviewed your proposal in the context of the nation-wide competition which it has been conducting and in which Los Angeles remains as one of 11 finalists. I am pleased to inform you that Los Angeles has been selected as one of four winning cities in that competition to receive UMTA funds for implementation of such a system, commencing with a \$1.28 million grant of preliminary engineering funds. Subject to satisfaction of environmental clearances and other statutory conditions, it is our intention to provide up to \$100 million from UMTA discretionary capital grant funds to assist in the construction of your proposed DPM system. This dollar ceiling is necessitated by the fact that our resources are limited and that your proposal was more than twice as expensive as any other we were considering. We suggest that you consider funding the parking and highway elements of your plan from Federal-aid highway sources, in order to permit you to lower your need for UMTA capital grant funds to an amount within the \$100 million ceiling.

With respect to your rapid transit proposal (Alternative E), we conclude that further study of fixed guideway alternatives in the Wilshire/La Brea corridor--but only in that corridor--is merited. This study may include initial engineering and environmental analysis, but before full preliminary engineering will be authorized, several issues must be resolved. Specifically:

- relationships between the proposed rapid transit and DPM systems must be examined, and any overlaps in service eliminated;
- all-bus alternatives must continue to be evaluated for the corridor, as your request for engineering funds itself suggests, and the possibility of

high-level bus transit along the Hollywood freeway to the San Fernando Valley should be explored as an alternative to extending the rapid transit line into the Valley;

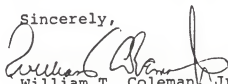
- detailed information must be provided on the relationship between the proposed rapid transit line and the region's land use objectives as identified in the Regional Development Guide or other plans; and
- the position of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on Alternative E must be stated, since the Board is identified as providing a portion of the capital funding for the proposal.

To support these further studies and initial engineering and environmental work on Alternative E, UMTA will entertain an application for up to \$2 million under Section 9 of our Act.

I want to emphasize the importance which we place upon your aggressively pursuing Transportation Systems Management solutions in the months ahead. We believe that much can be accomplished by giving buses, carpools and other high occupancy vehicles preferential treatment through newly constructed exclusive lanes, new ramps, ramp metering and other techniques short of taking existing lanes from auto traffic. Your intentions and future success in these efforts, which are proposed in Alternative II, will figure importantly in our further reviews of the appropriateness of rail transit in the region. As we evaluate your overall public transportation improvement program, you should know that the willingness of the State and of local governments to provide funds needed to support transit operating costs associated with that program will be an important factor in our capital funding decisions. It does not make sense for the Federal government or for public agencies concerned with public transportation in the Los Angeles area to commit hundreds of millions of public dollars for improved transit capital facilities if a consensus for meeting future transit operating costs cannot be achieved. Therefore, as you proceed with planning and preliminary engineering of your ambitious and far-sighted four-part program, I urge you to continue your leadership roles in examining funding sources and in reaching a consensus on meeting the region's long-term transit operating needs.

You, of course, appreciate that neither UMTA nor FHWA can be committed at this time to provide capital funds to implement your program. Under Federal law, such commitments can be made only after environmental clearances and other statutory conditions have been fulfilled. Nevertheless, we do commit today to provide over \$11 million for engineering and other studies from a combination of UMTA and FHWA sources. We look forward to continuing work with you in developing a public transportation system which will effectively serve the citizens of the Los Angeles region.

Sincerely,



William T. Coleman Jr.

cc: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
Los Angeles City Council  
CALTRANS  
Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

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